

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1 – 14 (Canceled)

15. (Currently amended) A method for suturing comprising the steps of:

providing an elongate needle having a distal end and a proximal end and a lumen extending from said proximal end to said distal end having sufficient size for passage of a predetermined size suture, said distal end having a tip configured ~~with a sharp point extending forward of an opening of said lumen for passage with a suture through a tissue, said opening further comprising a trailing edge on the side of said opening that is closer to said proximal end of said needle;~~

providing a syringe detachably connected to said needle proximal end;

selecting and introducing a length of suture into at least said needle from outside of said syringe and said needle;

~~filling said syringe with a quantity of liquid;~~

drawing a quantity of liquid through said distal end of said needle so as to further draw said length of suture towards said syringe;

passing said distal end of said needle with said suture through a tissue to be sutured ~~with the suture folded over the trailing edge;~~ and

expelling said length of suture from said distal end of said needle by hydraulic force from a quantity of said liquid in said syringe.

16. (Original) A method for suturing according to claim 15 wherein said step of selecting and introducing a length of suture into at least said needle comprises: inserting an end of said suture into said distal end of said needle; submerging said distal end of said needle with said suture in a quantity of liquid; and drawing said length of suture and a quantity of liquid into said needle with said syringe.

17. (Original) A method for suturing according to claim 16 wherein said needle is provided to have a curved configuration at said distal end.

18. (Original) A method for suturing according to claim 15 wherein said needle is provided to have a stiffening cover over a major portion of said needle.

19. (Original) A method for suturing according to claim 15 further comprising the steps of:

providing an elongate tubular member having a distal end and a proximal end and a passage extending from said proximal end to said distal end, first and second jaws on said distal end disposed in opposed relation, one of said first and second jaws being movable relative to the other and having an opening there through, the other of said first and second jaws including an open end of said passage oriented toward said opening, and means at said proximal end for moving said moveable jaw between open and closed positions;

providing said elongate needle of sufficient length to extend said distal end thereof through said passage past said open end and through said opening in said one of said jaws; and

grasping a tissue to be sutured between said first and second jaws; and

extending a said distal end thereof through said passage past said open end through said tissue and through said opening in said one of said jaws.

20. (Original) A method for suturing according to claim 19 wherein said needle is provided to have a curved configuration at said distal end; and said passage having an oval configuration to accommodate and maintain said curved needle oriented.